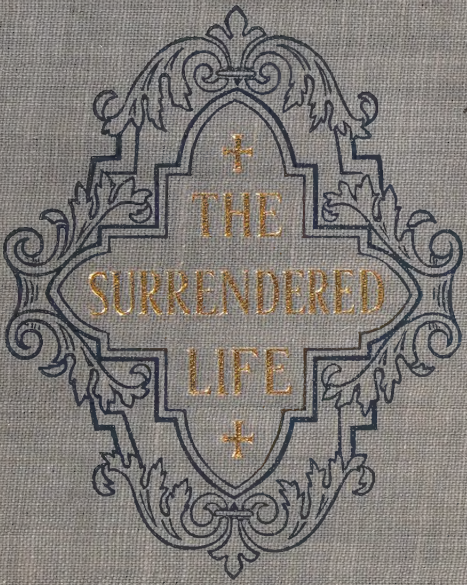

J. Wilbur Chapman

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The Surrendered Life

Quiet Hour Meditations

By

Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D. D.

Author of "And Peter," "Kadesh-Barnea," "The Lost Crown," "Received Ye the Holy Ghost?" etc.

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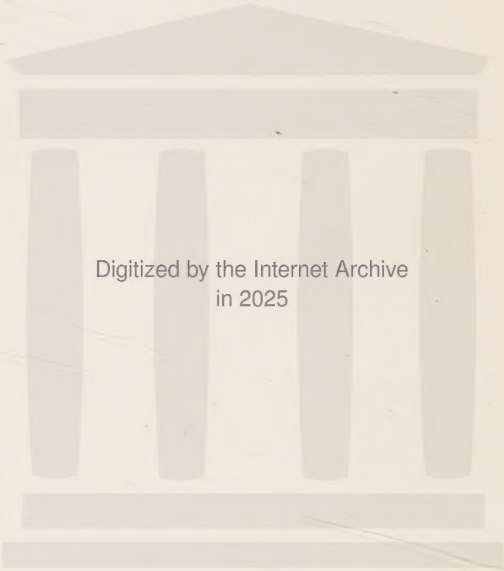
Dedication

TO MY DEAR FRIEND

MR. JOHN WILLIS BAER

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED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INTRODUCTION.

This little book is sent forth with the earnest prayer that God may make it a blessing to many of the young people of the Society of Christian Endeavor, as well as to all others who are longing for a better apprehension of Christ and what he may be to them.

There is no claim made in it to literary excellence; if any one should read it in search of this, he will find much in it to criticise. This is not in any sense a discussion. I have no contention with the brother who may differ with me; I only long to exalt Christ.

The words were first spoken with a desire that they might be used of God to lead some one into closer fellowship with our Lord, and, now that they are to be placed in book form, the desire is only intensified.

Let me say very clearly that, while these chapters are the record of an experience, it will be disastrous to some of my readers to seek to duplicate it in all of its details; but may I also add that it is possible for every Christian to have the consciousness of a definite surrender to Christ, or of a present yielding to his control, and from that point the life may be overflowing with blessing, if only we hold to unwavering trust in him?

These words were first spoken at the Nashville Quiet Hour in the summer of 1898. The scenes witnessed there will never be forgotten by many of us. It is confidently believed that the lives of many of the young people were changed by the Holy Ghost in the revelation of Christ.

The addresses are now sent forth in this form only because the requests have been numerous that this should be done.

May God's blessing be upon the book.

J. WILBUR CHAPMAN.

Philadelphia, 1898.

THE SURRENDERED LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE DOUBLE PORTION.

"And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." — *2 Kings 2 : 9.*

THERE are few things more inspiring in this world than a sunset. I recall vividly the privilege given me of riding through the Royal Gorge in the Rocky Mountains just as the day was dying out of the sky. I had had the opportunity of standing in the morning of the same day upon Pike's Peak as the sun came up, when the mountain peaks, one after the other, were disclosed through the mists, and their snow-capped heads glistened like diamonds, when suddenly, as

a slight change in my view-point was made, they became like the very gates of heaven, and a more glorious privilege of witnessing a sunrise, it seemed to me, was never given to mortal man.

But the evening of that day was quite as great an inspiration, when the little stream that ran beside the railroad track seemed like a thread of gold and the foliage on each side of the creek took on the various colors of the rainbow. I say again, there are few things more inspiring in nature than the setting of the sun.

A few days later I saw the sun go down in what is called the Golden Gate; and, as his track was left upon the sea, it seemed in his departure as if he had marked out the way up to the very gates of heaven. The sight was grand. On the plains of North Dakota once again, after the stormiest of days I

saw the most remarkable sunset of my life. Now the skies were all aglow with grandeur; now the clouds were banked together like choirs of angels; now they are changed to the golden streets of heaven; and now once again they rise before me as the train whirls away to the east, and they actually seem like the very throne of God as I have thought of it. A sunset is always fascinating, and it is a general rule that, the stormier the day, if the sunset is visible at all, the more beautiful the death of the day.

It is also a principle that men generally close their life as they live it. In the light of this statement, this journey of Elijah's, during which Elisha asks for the double portion of his spirit, is a fitting close of his remarkable career.

Yet one is almost discouraged as he studies such a character as Elijah. He seems to dwarf us with his greatness;

and, when we contrast with his ability to bring down fire from heaven, to lock up the clouds of the skies, and to hold the key and unlock them at his pleasure, our own weakness in prayer and the feebleness of our faith, he seems to us like some grand mountain peak, and we not for a moment worthy to be compared with him.

But, when we remember that the power of Elijah was not his own, and that the secret of his greatness was the indwelling of the Spirit of God, then discouragement gives way, and hope is born within us. And, when we read in the word of God that all the power of God is within our reach if we but obey him, our hearts bound within us for joy. If this power were really Elijah's, we might as well give up the story in its very beginning; for the model could not be copied, the ideal could never

be realized, the vision would only mock us. But when we learn that man's weakness may be coupled to God's strength, and that the connecting link is faith, there is no reason why any one should be downcast as he studies; but exactly the opposite spirit should possess him. It is said that, if one would command a force, he needs only to obey the law of it; therefore, if we would command God, we need only to yield to him the most implicit and perfect obedience and trust.

It is well for us to see Elijah and Elisha together as we study such a subject, for no two men could be more thoroughly unlike. It has been said that Elijah resembles John the Baptist in his earnestness and fervor, while Elisha more fitly represents Jesus in his gentleness and love. Elijah differs from Elisha as the lightning differs

from the sunbeam; but it is not to be forgotten that there may be quite as much power in the sunbeam, and in many cases more power than in the flash of the lightning. At least, it is more easily controlled. And I doubt not that Elijah and Elisha are put together that we may understand that power was just as really present in the experience of the one as in that of the other, for it is a difficult thing for us to imagine power in quietness. We more often think of it as being present in that which is exactly its opposite.

I. It is a good thing to see them walk together, these two men of God, and to notice the places where they tarry. We find them at Gilgal. It has been said that this is properly the place of apprehension. We find them at Bethel, and this is said to be, liter-

ally, the way of access. We study them at Jericho, and Jericho is hostility to the world. Finally we see them at Jordan, which is typical of the judgment. It is when they pass Jordan that Elisha receives the double portion of the spirit of Elijah. If it is the desire of any one who reads this word to have a double portion of the Spirit of our Master, it will be necessary for him first to go to Gilgal, where he may really appreciate the fact that this blessing is for him if he desires it; for him then to depart and go to Bethel, and find the way of access to blessing, which is always in the complete submission of one's will to Christ; for him to take his stand at Jericho and be against the world in everything.

There has never been a clearer call than to-day for nonconformity to the world on the part of the Christian.

One may receive power in perfect surrender; he retains power only by constant, living fellowship with Jesus Christ; and he can have fellowship with Christ only when he is separated from the world. Finally, one never really appreciates what it means to dwell in communion or to live the life of surrender until he has passed through the Jordan experience, where he has reckoned his old nature to be dead and where he makes positively no provision for the flesh.

We find that, as they went along from place to place, these two men talked together. This is a picture of what may be realized in the life of every Christian. It is not mysticism to say that a person may have such a realization of the presence of Christ that Christ would be nearer to him than the dearest earthly friend. It is

only faith. If one were to cultivate the habit of fastening his thoughts upon Christ as he walked the streets, sat in his home, or went about his business, he would find that day by day he would come to be like Him who was "altogether lovely." Thus to come into fellowship with Jesus Christ is to gain a victory over the things of the world and the things that are simply questionable.

> "I have heard the voice of Jesus;
> Tell me not of aught beside.
> I have seen the face of Jesus,
> And my soul is satisfied."

It is not possible for one to do inconsistent things as a rule if he is thus in constant communion with his Lord.

I find, also, as I study Elijah and Elisha together, that it is not a good thing for one to make plans for his own life. God has a plan for every

life. Happy the man who finds that plan and adapts himself in everything to it. Elijah prayed that he might die under the juniper-tree, and, if God had taken his plan, he would have been buried in the desert, and the moaning winds would have sung his requiem. But God's plan was altogether different, and instead of the desert for his burial-place God had for him a chariot of fire, which swept him in great grandeur and glory up into the very highest heavens. Paul never gave us better advice than to apprehend that for which we have been apprehended. If we only find out God's will and do it, our lives shall be filled with peace and blessing.

God asks only for our will, and he is a happy man who reaches the place where he holds back nothing from God. It is said that a celebrated bishop of

the Church of England had made a complete sacrifice of everything in his life except his affection for his wife. She was an invalid, and he felt that he could not yield her up, she had been so long upon his heart. Both husband and wife were passing through the severest spiritual struggle, and one day the good bishop reached the place where he said that he could even give up his wife to Christ. With tear-wet cheeks he came into her room to tell her that he had gained the victory, only to be met with the response that she, too, had crossed the line and had yielded everything to Christ.

During the night she died after her lingering illness; and, strange as it may seem, and yet not strange, when they rapped at the door of the bishop in the morning, his heart, too, had ceased to beat, and he, too, stood in the presence

of his God. God only wanted their wills; and, when they had been yielded to him, he would not allow them to be separated even for a minute of time, and he bound them together for an unending eternity.

II. What did Elisha mean when he said, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me"? Certainly not that he should have twice as much spirit as Elijah; but I am sure he must have meant to request of his master what was ever counted the elder brother's portion of an inheritance. In Deuteronomy, the twenty-first chapter, seventeenth verse, we read that the elder brother's portion was always double. Now Elijah is going away, and Elisha wants that which has made him so acceptable to God, and so powerful with the people.

Is there a double portion of the Spirit for us, do you think? We have but to read John, the tenth chapter and the tenth verse, to find that there is an answer to this in the affirmative: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Some people stop merely with the possession of life; but this is not the whole plan of God, and it is his will that every hour of every day the waves of the life of our blessed Christ should roll in upon us.

The Rev. F. B. Meyer tells of his journey to the Mediterranean Sea, where he discovered what he thought was a tide, and yet that sea is tideless. When he began to study it, he found that there was a connection between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and what he thought was the tide was the rolling in of the waves from the Atlantic

Ocean from the tide of that great sea; and Mr. Meyer has said that there will be an apparent tide in the Mediterranean Sea until it drains the Atlantic dry; that is, so long as the channel is kept open. So there will be for every one of us a constant influx of life and overflow of blessing so long as the channel between ourselves and Christ is kept unhindered. The smallest secret sin held and cherished could stay the coming of this marvellous blessing.

III. What are the conditions?

1. We must desire the double portion of the Spirit only that we may live for God's glory. Not that we may win souls for Christ, not that we may go as missionaries, not that we may have peace. It is a far better position for one to occupy than any of these when he reaches the place when he can

say, "I have no ambition either to win souls or to go to a foreign land, but only that my life might be for the glory of Him who bought me with his own precious blood."

2. We must bring clean vessels to him. Mr. Moody has said, God does not require golden vessels, neither does he seek for silver ones, but he must have clean ones. And because of the fact that Jesus Christ is our mediator before the Father, it is possible for one to keep himself "unspotted from the world," for "the blood of Jesus Christ" is cleansing "us from all sin."

3. The possession of the double portion of the Spirit must be our greatest desire. If we permit anything to occupy a higher place in our affections than this, the blessing will tarry and the experience may never be ours.

4. We must keep our eyes constantly fixed upon Christ. The secret of all power is with him, and power is not an experience; but Christ is the very power of God himself. When the eyes are fastened upon him, it is a very easy matter for God to bestow the blessing. As Elijah and Elisha walked along, and Elisha made the request, Elijah said to him, "Thou hast asked a hard thing; but, if thou wilt keep thine eyes fastened upon me, thou shalt have it." When they had crossed the Jordan, and the chariot of fire came near, and Elijah stepped in and was lifted heavenward, Elisha seemed unable to speak for a moment, and then he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" And Elijah took his old mantle, and dropped it from the side of the chariot of fire, and it fell upon

the shoulders of Elisha, and he had his reward.

Keep your eyes fixed upon the taken-up Master, who is ever at the right hand of God; and you have learned the deepest secret of abiding peace and power.

IV. What are the effects of the possession of the double portion of the Spirit?

1. It may not mean greatness among men. Elisha did not bring down fire from heaven, neither did he lock up the clouds for a season. His ministry was of an altogether different sort. He visited the poor widow whose sons were about to be sold into bondage, and freed her from her sorrow. He went into the home of the Shunammite and raised her boy, thus filling her with rapturous joy. Your possession of power may never make you promi-

nent among men, but your life will at once become very pleasing to God.

2. It does mean constant victory over sin. Let no one say that he can of himself forsake his sins; for, while individual shortcomings may be overcome, yet back of all these individual sins burns a fever which only the touch of the Physician's hand can stay. But let every one rest assured of this one fact, that, while it is not at all a question as to whether we can keep ourselves from sinning, — we know we cannot, — it is altogether a question as to whether he could keep us if we would give him the right to do it. When one has passed through the experience of complete surrender, of perfect trust, of unwavering faith, he has reached the place where he is so firmly united to Christ, not only in fact but in experience, that Christ pushes out from

his life that which has been his constant overthrowing and the secret of his failure. I beseech you, claim at once the double portion of the Spirit.

CHAPTER II.

A MIDNIGHT STRUGGLE.

"And there wrestled a man with him." — *Gen. 32 : 24.*

If one has read the preceding chapter on "the double portion" of the Spirit, he has now come to the place where he is conscious of failure, and also conscious of the fact that he longs to be freed from the dominion of sin. It is also very likely that very many of us will be called upon to pass through some such experience as that which shall be described in the words that follow, introduced by the text above.

This is a part of the story of Jacob, the man in the Old Testament who

really appeals to us much as does Peter in the New. When we read of his failures and his many grievous mistakes, yet read that our God is called "the God of Jacob," we certainly take heart, because we know that, whatever may be our wanderings and failures, God will help us to overcome them.

There are many things about the life of Jacob that would apply to us.

First of all, his failings: he deceived his father; he cheated Esau; and he was exactly like ourselves, except for the grace of God. Let us not be too critical of the men who have made awful mistakes in their lives, for, were it not for God's sovereign grace, we, too, doubtless should have been worse.

His aspirations speak to us; we, too, have had our Bethels, when we have been almost face to face with God, and

have heard him speak. His sorrows touch us; for we also have had our struggles and our losses, and many of us are living to-day with marks upon us because of some great sacrifice we have made, of some great burden we have borne. But the story of Jacob ought to lead us, every one, to the place, where, like him, we may not only have a new name given to us, but may have a new nature as well.

I. This event in his life is most striking. He had stolen his birthright, as you know, and he had gone away, a fugitive from his home. He had stopped at Bethel to sleep, with stones for his pillow and a condemning conscience to disturb his dreams. He had gone into the far country and served fourteen years for the woman he loved, and he is now homeward

bound once more after these many years. As he journeys, he hears that Esau is coming, and, as "conscience makes cowards of us all," so Jacob at once became afraid. He sent messengers ahead to meet his brother, and he divided both his men and his flocks so that one messenger after another should come before Esau, and Esau should thus be impressed with the greatness of his erring brother.

Finally, Jacob reaches Jabbok's ford, and he sent his family over while he tarried on the opposite side of the stream; and one of the most suggestive texts in all the story is this: "And Jacob was left alone." It was a very solemn place. Two gentlemen determined some time ago to spend the night at Jabbok's ford, that they might enter more fully into the experience of Jacob; and they waited until the mid-

night hour, and then fled. But it may be more solemn by far for some of us in these days to come into close quarters with God, and allow him to deal with our shortcomings and our sins, than for Jacob to meet the angel and struggle as he did. But may God help us every one to be perfectly honest, and ask him to deal with us very faithfully.

II. Jabbok was the crisis of Jacob's life. Bethel was like his conversion, and he might that night have so completely yielded himself to God that all the story of his after years would have been different. But we find that instead of so doing he had his varied experience, his sorrows as well as his joys, his days of rapture as well as his hours of depression; his was a very checkered career.

You, too, at the day of your regeneration might have apprehended all the blessing of God; for the day of your birth into the kingdom you became a child of God, an heir of God, and joint heir with Jesus Christ, and it is because you did not apprehend your spiritual blessings and live up to them that you have had the dreary experience, days when you were hot and again cold; near to God, and again far away from him; consistent, and then afterwards inconsistent. But this never was God's plan for your life; and, if this has been your experience, may God bring you to some crisis at this present time when you shall ask him to put his finger upon the thing that has been wrong in your life, and, even though it be the giving up of the dearest thing in the world to you, ask him to give you strength to let it go.

Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of power. Claim it if you have fulfilled the conditions.

III. "There wrestled a man with him." This is not a story to describe Jacob's earnestness in prayer; it has too many times been used in that way. Jacob did not wrestle with the angel, but the angel wrestled with him. Jacob only struggled; the angel of the Lord did the wrestling. It is a picture of God's faithful dealings with one of his own, and doubtless he has been dealing with many of you in the same way. If there have been in your life constant discontent and oft-repeated experiences of unrest, these are clear indications of the fact that God is having a struggle with you, and that he would lead you out of your old position of half-heartedness, and forward into the place of

victory, and beyond. It is a sad thing when we know that the angel was the angel of the Lord, to see Jacob struggle as he did; but it is a more awful thing by far for one to hold out for a minute against God's plan for one's life.

I know how very many times we think that, if we were to surrender to him, we should be called upon to do some hard thing, to bear some heavy burden, to dwell frequently in the darkness, and altogether have anything but a happy experience; but the testimony of God's word is quite the opposite, — "I delight to do thy will, O God."

If my children should give me the privilege for one day of choosing for them everything that would enter into that day, I would not put upon them the things they did not like, nor bring

before them the things that were distasteful to them; but I should spend hours trying to determine what would be their greatest joy, and minister to them their greatest happiness. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." We may as well learn it quickly. We can well afford to trust God in all this matter of the surrendered life.

After Jacob had struggled for all this time the angel "touched the hollow of his thigh," and his sinew shrunk away. There must be something between you and God if you are not at rest and filled with peace. It may be as small as a sinew and counted almost as useful as a sinew, but God must touch that thing before he bestows power upon you. With some it may be pride; with others, temper; and with still others, an evil tongue or

an unforgiving spirit. But, whatever it is, God will reveal it to you if you will wait honestly before him, and he will put it out of your life if you will but give him the privilege so to do.

IV. The clinging comes next, when Jacob simply yields himself to the embrace of the angel and struggles no more. "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me," he cries; "and he blessed him there." Have you not learned that God always waits for you to put yourself perfectly in his hands to be controlled by his mind, dominated by his Spirit, instructed by his word, that he may give you all his power to be used in your life?

A man made his way to California in the days when gold was being discovered in great quantities, and stayed away from his Eastern home for years,

but he never allowed a month to go by when he did not send back to his loved ones some token of his love. The finest pictures were in their home. The finest adornments of every sort were in every room; but at last after years of separation his wife wrote him, saying, "My husband, we are pleased with your offering, but the time has come when we want you"; and this is what God is saying. We have offered him a little of our time and a very little of our money, and occasionally displays of our strength; but he is saying to us to-day, "My child, I want you and all there is of you; throw yourself into my arms and rest, and I will give you power."

V. When God touched him, he began to limp. If anything has stood between us and God, and we have held it as a

cherished treasure in our minds, doubtless when God touches it he will leave upon us the mark of it all. Some of us to-day may be forced to limp away from our close embrace of him; but it would be better ever to limp, so far as the world is concerned, and be counted maimed, if only we might have God's power and his blessing upon us. It is not so much a question of what the world thinks of us in these days, but altogether a question of how we stand in the estimation of God. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me," should be the Christian's constant prayer.

VI. Did you ever notice the result of the angel's wrestling and Jacob's yielding?

1. Jacob received a new name. "What is thy name?" said the angel to him, and I could imagine how Jacob would hesitate for a little; but then he made confession and said, "My name is Jacob." This by interpretation means "supplanter" and "cheat." But the confession of his weakness brought the display of God's strength, for the angel said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel."

If you have come to the place of crisis to-day in your life, and you have yielded to God, rise and claim his blessing and his power. You will not need to talk much about it to those who are round about you; but they will give you the new name, too. For they will notice your gentleness, and take knowledge of your peace, and bear witness to your power. It is not possible for one to be a Spirit-filled man or woman,

without having his name changed in the world.

2. The angel said, "Thou hast power with God, and with men." But you will notice that it was "power with God" first. We ordinarily put it the other way, and many of us would like power that we might be able to preach: and others, that we might sing; and still others, that we might for some selfish reason come to the possession of a great fame; but a man can never really have power with men in this world until first of all he has power with God: and only the life that is right, and the heart that is clean, and the will that is really surrendered, may claim this.

But after one has surrendered, and received the new name and the baptism of power, the more serious problem is, How shall he keep it? It is a good thing to have a crisis in one's life, and

a date of definite surrender; but, while the memory of such an experience is very blessed, it is a fatal mistake to try to make it last for all the future days.

It is said that the Frazier gun hurls a projectile of a thousand pounds, using five hundred pounds of powder at a blast, and that this projectile may be sent through armor-plate seventeen inches thick; that it is also possible with this same gun to throw a shell thirteen miles, and, when the gun is discharged, it is automatically thrown back again for reloading; and, when it is thrown back, it charges an air-chamber, which, when the gun is loaded and again released, throws it back again in position. So the gun in use is always being fired and always being charged. This is the picture for the Christian. He is always giving forth of that which God has given to him if he is really God's child;

but he must ever be back again at the feet of the Master, receiving a fresh infilling, a new anointing, another vision of the face of the risen Christ. This is the picture of continued blessing always.

CHAPTER III.

THE BREAKING OF THE DAY.

"Until the breaking of the day." — *Gen. 32 : 24.*

This text is really a part of the verse which has gone before in the preceding chapter, but it so fitly describes the experience of very many Christians that I suggest it to you now as the heading for this meditation.

There is really no better illustration for the Christian than the story of Jacob. By nature a supplanter and a cheat, and by grace Israel the prince, his life was eventful, his death was a victory; yet we never really appreciate Jacob until he comes to the end. Just as we have

seen the scaffolding about some great building, and never appreciated the fine point of its architecture until the scaffolding was removed, so with Jacob, as we come to the close, and the weeks, months, and years slip away from him, we see him as he really is, a prince of God, and a man of power.

There are differences of opinion as to which is the best story of his life. Some prefer Bethel, where Jacob saw God face to face. If this be the story, you will notice that it was when he was asleep that he had this vision; and you will remember that it is when we are insensible to the world about us that we catch the best glimpses of God. Paul was lying at the gate of a certain city, and they had left him for dead. They had stoned him with stones, and he was bruised and bleeding, and when he writes of it himself he says, "I knew

a man fourteen years ago, who was caught up into the heavens, and heard things that were not lawful for him to utter."

But of all the stories of Jacob's life, I prefer the Jabbok's ford. It was a very solemn place, but it was the place where the day broke upon him. For one to have a heart-searching time is an exceedingly solemn matter; but, if you will but submit to it, a day of peace and blessing will break upon you, the like of which you have never seen in your fellowship with the world.

One's conversion is really the breaking of the day, and there is no reason in the plan of God why, from the point of conversion, peace and blessing may not be multiplied every hour of every day. Some people make one horizon of their life their conversion, and the other horizon the return of their Lord,

and all that stretches out between is a dreary waste and a constant struggle. But this is not God's plan; he means that every day shall be filled with brightness, and every hour should be overflowing with joy. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." And, if he should lead us for a little time in the night, he gives us songs in the night that would drive away the power of the darkness. Paul's words are an illustration of the subject,—"And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." (Acts 22 : 9, 10.) "For God, who com-

manded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4 : 6.)

I. If you are a Christian and your life has been entirely unsatisfactory, let it be remembered that there are three things that will make the day for the child of God to be darkest of nights.

1. Unconfessed sin. If you have allowed any sin to go without quick confession, whether that sin be against your nearest and dearest friend, against yourself, or directly against God, rest assured that the sun will seem to be obscured in the heaven of your life, and you can have no light until that sin is put away. Did you ever notice Paul's catalogue of sins which the Christian must guard against very carefully if he

would keep from grieving the Holy Spirit of God? Read Eph. 4 : 29–32. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Then by the closest examination see whether any one of these sins has found lodgment in your life.

2. If self is allowed ever to be in the way, the light of the presence of Christ will surely fade away from you. So long as Paul is in the seventh of Romans

and is constantly using the personal pronoun as you will find he does, he is forced to the expression, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and it is the old figure of a Roman prisoner tied to the body of a dead man and compelled to endure the bondage until death releases him. But, when he comes into the eighth of Romans, and exalts the Spirit instead of himself, it is a chapter full of joyful exhortations, the keynote of which is, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

If I turn my back on the sun, my shadow is before me; if I face the sun, my shadow is behind me; if I stand just underneath the sun, my shadow is completely out of sight. If I so turn my back upon Christ in any way, self

is exceedingly prominent. If I face Christ, self is in a measure put away, and, while I may not be conscious of it, others frequently are. But if I stand just beneath Christ, with him above me in everything, the old selfish principle is for a time overthrown, and I am a free man in Christ Jesus.

3. Any fellowship with the world will bring the darkness.

A little boy was asked his name by a guest in the house, and said that sometimes he thought it was "Don't," for they were always saying it to him. This is certainly true of the child of God, for in the sixth chapter of Romans, the thirteenth verse, we find Paul saying "Don't be yielding yourselves to sin, but do yield yourselves unto God," and in Galatians the fifth chapter, sixteenth verse, "Don't walk in the flesh, but do walk in the Spirit;" and in

Romans the twelfth chapter, the second verse, "Don't be fashioned like the world, but do be transformed unto the image and likeness of Christ."

In each case we have a choice we may make. The one means fellowship with the world; the other, fellowship with God. To live in touch with the world is ever to be shorn of power; to live in fellowship with God is ever to be receiving of his fulness. Whatever it may be that stands between you and him to-day, put it away, and the day will break.

II. Night is a very poor time for discernment. God made everything to be seen in the sunlight; and, when one as a Christian is living in this place of darkness, three things are true.

1. Bible-reading is most unsatisfactory. No man really ever can begin to

understand the Bible until he begins to live the life of God.

2. God's will is a mystery. He does not reveal his will to the one who lives out of fellowship with him.

3. Service is drudgery. If ever you find a Christian objecting to Christian service, you may put it down as a rule that he is a Christian living out of touch with Christ.

III. What will bring the day?

1. Quick confession of sin.

At a meeting of the college men of the Christian Associations of the State of Ohio, when I was speaking of the deadening influence of unconfessed sin upon the life of a Christian, one of the students fairly sobbed aloud in his distress, and at the close of the meeting went to his room in the hotel and wrote this letter: —

"*Dear Father,* — Last summer I went to your private drawer and took out twenty dollars. I am not able now to return it, but I write to you to ask your forgiveness, as I have already asked it of God."

When the letter was signed and sealed and dropped into the post-box, the burden of sin rolled away from the heart of that man, and he entered upon a career of Christian service he never had even dreamed of before. Testimonies received concerning him have revealed the fact that God has simply led him from one place of power and victory to another since that time of sharp struggle when the day broke upon him.

2. If we knew how to pray, we should ever be dwelling in the light instead of in the darkness. In Genesis thirty-second chapter, ninth to the eleventh verses, we find Jacob using

a form of prayer which it would be well for us all to copy. He said first, "Thou saidst it, O Lord." If you would have God's blessing, seek a promise and hold on to it.

He said again, "I am not worthy." You, too, must learn that every visitation of God's pardoning grace or his uplifting power is due entirely, not to anything in ourselves, but only to his great goodness and love "wherewith he hath loved us." He said in the next place, "O Lord, deliver me." Such a cry as this from a heart weighed down with sin is always met with a ready response. This is God's word, and it cannot fail.

3. Keep constantly in touch with God by the reading of his word. "The entrance of thy words giveth light," the Psalmist has said; and it is no more possible for one to keep

God's word throbbing in his life and to keep unconfessed sin there at the same time than it is to keep light and darkness in the same room at the same moment.

These three steps will bring the day, however dense the darkness may have been. I appeal to you to ask God to search your heart at this moment, that he may put away the evil thing.

IV. It is a glorious light that thus breaks upon us.

One of my friends travelling in the South noticed a gentleman opposite him in the car who seemed very nervous. When my friend spoke to him, he said: "I have just been down to a Southern city," giving its name. "I have had my eyes operated upon; and, while I went down a blind man, I am going home with power to see, and I

am almost at my home station, and my wife and children will be there to meet me." He described the beauty of his wife, whom he had never seen but with his finger-tips. My friend said that, when the station was announced, the man bounded to the door and down the steps; and then, said my friend, "I saw him clasp his wife and his children in his arms, and above the roar of the departing train I heard him shout, 'Glory to God; I can see, I can see.'"

If you will but reach the place where you will ask God to put away from you every sin, you will come to the time when God will give you the power to say, "I once was blind, but now I see, once dwelt in the darkness, but now all is light about me."

CHAPTER IV.

HAVE YOU RECEIVED HIM?

"Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" —*Acts 19 : 2.*

I HOLD very clearly in these days that, when one receives Jesus Christ as a Saviour, he immediately becomes the heir of all spiritual blessings in Christ. That time may be called the baptism of the Holy Ghost, when he becomes in fact a member of the body of Jesus Christ.

There is no reason in the plan of God why one may not from the point of regeneration day by day and step by step enter into greater and yet greater

blessing; but, alas! very many of us do not. We who at the time of our entrance into light failed to embrace it all, must come to the place where, after the close dealing of God with us, and after a time of heart-searching to find what may have stood between us and power, and after a definite act of surrender, we simply apprehend by the Holy Ghost that which has been ours all the time.

A man died in the poorhouse in London one of the most abject paupers. He had had a little estate in England, but had counted it worthless; and indeed it was, so far as the production of any grain was concerned, for it was anything but fertile. But after his death it was discovered by his heirs that on that piece of ground was a copper-mine, and they who have inherited it are living to-day in luxury. This

is the illustration for the Christian. All the time we have had Christ, but, alas! all the time we have failed to appreciate him.

I ask the question of the text, that we may come to-day to the place where we shall wholly submit to Christ and by the Holy Ghost lay hold upon our birthright privilege. What is really the evidence of our need?

1. If we are constantly filled with unrest, this is the clearest of evidence. In the fourteenth chapter of John, the twenty-seventh verse, we read, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." It is really a most difficult thing to define peace; the best way is to take its opposite; it is the opposite of unrest, of strife, of confusion. If our experience is anything else than this, we are certainly in need of the deepening work of the Holy Ghost, and we

need especially to receive him, that he may reveal Christ unto us.

2. If there is constant failure at the same point, this is the clearest indication that the Spirit of God has yet a deeper work to do for us. You will notice that I do not say "if there is constant failure," — for alas! this is true of the most of us, — but "if there is constant failure at the same point."

In Professor Drummond's book, "The Ideal Life," he says, "Let no one smile at the mere loss of his temper, and for two reasons; first, if you will analyze temper, you will find that in every display of it there was jealousy, anger, pride, sulkiness, touchiness, selfishness." This is not so small a matter, after all. But you ought also to be disturbed in the loss of it because the temper reveals the fact that there is back of it all a fever burning which

needs the touch of the Master's hand. Whenever you find a Christian who is constantly failing at the same point, whether it be the loss of temper, the use of an unruly tongue, the display of an unforgiving spirit, these sins reveal an unclean condition of the heart, which ought to be made right.

3. If there is inability to pray. This is the clearest indication that the Spirit of God has yet some work to do for us. Andrew Murray says that our prayer life is the index of the Spirit's work in us. If this be true, then for some the work has not been very deep. He also says that feebleness in prayer is a mark of disease; and, if this be true, many of us are sick children, and need the presence of the great Physician.

The only way for us to receive the touch of the Holy Ghost so that he may reveal Christ to us is: —

1. A willingness to forsake every known sin. If one sin is cherished, the blessing tarries.

2. A willingness to give up everything which may be revealed to us as the days go by. For we shall have more light to-morrow than to-day, and something may be questionable to-morrow that we could do with a clear conscience now.

3. A complete surrender, putting everything in his hands and yielding to him the right to control us in everything.

4. After this, simply to trust him to work in us and through us as it may please him.

There is a chance at this point for us to come to the test; and, if we should allow this moment to pass without yielding, it may be with us as it was with Moses at Kadesh-barnea; he

came in sight of Canaan, and never entered it, but afterward God brought him up to Nebo and Pisgah, where he could see stretched out before him the land "that flowed with milk and honey"; but he could not enter in. God may bring us up in sight again of this most wonderful blessing, but it may slip away from us and we go poverty-stricken through all the rest of our years.

If you should ever visit the Freiburg Cathedral, you will notice there the old organ which was presided over by one man for many years; and, when his hands had lost their cunning and he could not play, they gave him the charge of the organ. One day there came a stranger to visit the cathedral; and, when he saw the organ, he asked for the privilege of testing its tone. This was refused by the old organist, who said that no one's hands but his

and the organist's of the present day ever touched it.

"But," said the stranger, "I myself am an organist, and I shall be greatly pleased if I may touch the keys of this celebrated instrument."

After much persuasion the organist allowed him to get on to the organ bench. His fingers had no sooner touched the keys than the building was filled with melody. He played on and on and on, and then slipped from the bench.

The old man said to him, "What might your name be?"

The answer was, "My name is Felix Mendelssohn."

Until the day of his death the old organist used to say, "And I all but missed the chance of hearing Mendelssohn play."

But there is better than Felix Men-

delssohn here at this present time,— the Spirit of God, who reveals Jesus Christ. He can touch our lives and make them sound out peace, and touch them again and make them ring out joy, and every day of every year will be but one sweet song if he controls us.

CHAPTER V.

THE MEANING OF IT ALL.

"Lo, I am with you alway." — *Matt. 28 : 20.*

After we have passed through the various studies in the preceding chapters we come last of all to the meaning of this definite stand which we have taken.

1. It means the conscious presence of our glorified Lord. I begin to understand why Paul could suffer and never complain, even though he was in a dungeon; how he could say, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content;" how it was that Peter could preach with so convicting a testimony. These men believed that

what he had said to them was literally true, — "Lo, I am with you alway."

If one could take the hand of Christ, and go with him to one's home, sit down at Christ's feet, and, looking up into his face, could hear him speak, what a privilege it would be, and what a source and secret of strength! But the Holy Ghost has come to be to every believer what Jesus Christ would have been if he had tarried in the flesh, and it is your privilege and mine, when living the life of complete surrender, to have the Spirit lead us into the very presence of our glorified Lord; nay, more, it is our privilege to abide there forever.

2. For the disciples, this complete yielding of themselves to Christ meant a constant baptism of joy, — "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full," — and it would

not be possible for one to put the Bible in the right place in Christian experience without having his heart always set to the music of heaven.

It is said that when Nansen, the explorer, went to the Arctic regions, he took with him a phonograph into which he had had his wife, a most accomplished musician, sing her sweetest songs, and into which also his little children had talked a message to him ; and, when he was in the frozen seas of the north, and the nights were dark, and his heart was almost broken because of a sense of loneliness, he would start the phonograph, and hear again the music of his home, which would make his heart rejoice. With all due reverence for the word of God, it is like his phonograph to us. Into it he has talked messages of peace and promises of blessings, and one could not go on

believing that he was led by the Spirit and controlled by Christ without all the time being filled with joy in the study of this book.

3. It was a baptism of holiness for the disciples. Holiness is not something that a man is; neither is it something that he does; but holiness is God in us, and we have just as much of holiness as we have of God, no more and no less. Or, as some one else has expressed it, holiness is healthiness. And we are healthy only when we have placed ourselves in right relations with God, and are possessed of the perfect heart toward him, and are constantly willing to do his will.

There are certain dangers ever before the one who claims to be filled with the Spirit, or to have had the experience of a definite surrender to him: —

1. The censorious spirit. It ought

to be clearly stated that this is no part of the surrendered life. If you are filled with the Holy Ghost, it will not be your disposition to criticise others who have had a different experience, or possibly have never claimed this.

2. A disposition that leads one to say, "I am holier than thou." Who art thou that judgest a brother? Let God be the judge, and let your life be so discreet and your spirit so filled with heaven that the confession of your holiness shall come from your brother and not from yourself.

3. A danger of talking too much about it. It is a good thing for one to have the definite experience and frequently to state it, but it is not necessary that one should be constantly saying that he has what others do not have; for the best proof of this is the life of the surrendered man, and his

most eloquent testimony is his daily walk and conversation.

4. A disposition to think that, when one is filled with the Holy Ghost, he must separate himself from others of God's children who have not made the same claim to blessing. It ought ever to be remembered that separation is not separatism. I am clearly convinced that God has not called us to separate ourselves from the church; and, while it may be true that one could criticise some points in the life of the church, as he could criticise many points in the life of his own home, even though he might count it the dearest place in the world to him, yet it is no part of the Christian, certainly no part of the Spirit-filled Christian, to say harsh things about the church, the best institution the world has ever seen.

There are certain statements that

ought also be made very clearly before this message comes to a close.

1. We may come into the possession of power by the way of different experiences.

For example, Mr. Moody gives his experience of the waves of God's blessing rolling in upon him until he was obliged to rise and ask God to stay his hand.

On the other hand, Mr. Meyer tells of his Keswick experience, when out on the hillside in the night he simply said: "O God, I am tired in body and in mind; I cannot be in sympathy with those who with great shouts in the tent yonder are receiving the manifestation of thy power. Is there not some other way?" And God said to him, "My child, take the gift of power from the hand of the ascended Saviour as you took the gift of pardon from the hand

of the crucified Saviour, both by faith." "And I arose from my knees," says Mr. Meyer, "confidently believing that the blessing was mine."

Some with much enthusiasm, some with none at all; some with an experience that is as marked as the transition from night into day, and some simply take the step by faith, and trust God when there seems to be almost no change at all. But let it ever be remembered that, if one will preach the Spirit of God to himself as a Christian as he preaches Christ to a sinner, he will have the whole truth, and every step after that must be taken only by faith.

2. There may be a disposition to doubt after one has surrendered. I remember very well a gentleman's offering me a blank check which he said I could carry with me. The check

had his name signed to it, but no amount of money filled in; and the man counts his wealth a million dollars. The check was valuable to me because I believed in the name of my friend, and God's promises are valuable to me because I believe in Jesus Christ. In Galatians third chapter, fourteenth verse, it is clearly stated "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith"; and, if you have definitely surrendered and clearly accepted Christ as one who is to be your power as well as your life, just believe God in it all, and he will not disappoint you, even though the precious vision of the face of Christ may tarry for many days.

3. Remember that there is only one surrender.

A dear friend came into one of my meetings to ask me whether she could give me a Bible; and, when I expressed

my pleasure in receiving it, she put in my hands a beautiful Bible, which I used for a long time. She came in another time, and looked at the book with much interest, but she did not give it to me. She came into my home as a guest, and she was delighted with the Bible, but she did not offer it to me again. She really had no right to do it; for, when she put the book into my hands and took her hands off, it was mine.

So when I yielded myself to God definitely and finally, I became his, his because he had redeemed me, and now his because I had consciously surrendered. I may at different times bring to mind this act of surrender, but I have no right to take the gift back and present it to him again.

4. We may have only one baptism of the Holy Ghost. This, I believe, comes at regeneration. But we may

have many infillings. If one should use his power for anything but the glory of God, he must be filled again. If one should consume this blessing upon his own lusts, he must be filled again; and, indeed, if one should simply live his life as a Christian, he must be constantly infilled; for he is ever expending the strength given to him of God, and, just as in the physical life we breathe in and then breathe out, and our breathing out is in proportion to our breathing in, and we make our effort to breathe in and no effort at all to breathe out, so in our spiritual life we must be constantly breathing in of God, to be constantly infilled. We must ever remember that our receiving of God must be in proportion to our giving out to men, and also ever have in mind, if we are faithful in the matter of our relationship to Christ, it will be

as natural for us to work and as natural for us to display God's power as it is natural to breathe.

But after the one baptism and the many infillings, there ought to be special anointings for special service. The minister never ought to preach a sermon, the singer never ought to sing his song, the Sunday-school teacher never ought to meet his class, until he has first waited upon God, that he may be anointed with the Holy Ghost for this special service.

This is the message of the Quiet Hour. The following questions are given at its close: —

1. Is your life a Spirit-filled life?

2. If not, why not?

3. Will you wait now before God to ask him where you are wrong and to make you right?

4. Will you now surrender to him,

and claim from him what is your birthright privilege as one of his children?

5. Will you sign this form of special dedication? "On this day of 189 I dedicate myself to God, promising him that I will strive in everything to do his will.

"Name, "

THE END.

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